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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JULY 12, 2000

## **SENATE APPROVES BENNETT AMENDMENT SHORTENING REVIEW PERIOD FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE COMPUTERS**

*Measure will help preserve global leadership of U.S. high-tech industry*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The U.S. Senate today by a vote of 86-11 approved legislation sponsored by Senator Bob Bennett (R-Utah), chairman of the Senate Republican High-Tech Task Force, to shorten the congressional review period for the export of high performance computers by American hightech companies.

"Outdated export controls are threatening U.S. computer companies from expanding in some of the world's most rapidly growing markets," Bennett said. "This bill will help correct that problem and maintain America's competitive edge in the high-tech global marketplace. An F-16 makes it to market in 30 days. It's more than reasonable that a computer microprocessor get there in 60, rather than the 180 which current law demands.

"Failure to reduce this waiting period means the U.S. will essentially cede its competitive advantage to the rest of the world. The Senate's overwhelming endorsement of this bill sends a strong message that this is unacceptable," Bennett added.

Under current law, when the administration makes changes to export policy governing the computing power of high performance computers, measured in millions of theoretical operations per second (MTOPS), Congress has six months (180 days) to review the change before it goes into effect. The Bennett amendment, cosponsored by Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), reduces this congressional review period to 60 days and states that the counting of those days would not be tabulated when Congress adjourns *sine die*.

In 1965 Gordon Moore, cofounder of Intel, made the theoretical observation that processor performance doubles every 18 months. This theory has recently been overtaken by technological realities. For example, from 1998 to 1999 microprocessor performance increased almost five times. From 1997 to the summer of 2000, microprocessors used in business computers have increased in performance more than 17 times, from 350 MTOPS to 6132 MTOPS. The Bennett amendment will help ensure that U.S. products do not become obsolete before they are made available in the world markets due to governmental delays.

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Foreign computer companies from Japan, Germany, France, Taiwan and others now sell business computers comparable to the best U.S. business computers. This legislation will allow U.S. high-tech companies to compete on a level playing field with their global counterparts and not be excluded from critical markets due to burdensome waiting periods.

"The 180-day congressional waiting period is too long for an industry, like the U.S. computer industry, whose continued success depends in part on its ability to beat its foreign competition to the marketplace," added Bennett.

The Bennett-Reid amendment was offered to S. 2459 the Department of Defense Authorization Bill. The House version of the DoD Authorization Bill includes language identical to the Bennett bill.

Bennett's amendment has been endorsed by the Information Technology Industry Council, the Computer Coalition for Responsible Exports and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

"Computer exports are critical to the continued success of the high tech industry and America's leadership in information technology. While we strongly support our country's security objectives, there seems no rationale for treating business-level computers that are widely available on the world market as inherently more dangerous than items being removed from the nation's munitions list, an act that gives Congress just 30 calendar days to review," said Rhett Dawson, President of the Information Technology Industry Council, a coalition of leading providers of information technology products and services. ITIC's member's include Dell Computer, IBM, Microsoft, Hewlett Packard and others.

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<http://www.senate.gov/~bennett>